

NORTH CAROLINA HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

2006-2012

Executive Summary

North Carolina's Historic Preservation Plan is a multiyear plan produced by the State Historic Preservation Office. It reflects public input and participation at various levels from throughout the state. This plan, which was developed through surveys, public questionnaires, and advisory committee review, will guide preservation in North Carolina from 2006 to 2012.

Several issues shaped discussion about the role of historic preservation in North Carolina in the coming years. They include land use, training and education, local preservation planning, heritage tourism, legislation, leadership, and economic factors. Public input helped define and prioritize key issues that in turn shaped a vision, goals, and objectives.

The vision articulated by citizens and professionals alike propels a preservation plan which: reflects the full, rich, and diverse history of North Carolina; builds communities and social relationships; tells our stories in a connective context increasing knowledge and respect for our diverse heritage; educates and empower citizens to shape the future of their communities; creates strong networks for communication and action; is integrated into all facets of planning and decision making; is a strong presence in shaping policies and legislation; evolves through self examination and adoption of new technologies and techniques; and inspires the next generation to understand its history and to be good stewards of it.

The vision for preservation inspired five goals —

- **Outreach and Communication:** create a strong preservation network that shares successes and information with a variety of audiences through technology and targeted public relations.
- **Education:** create new educational opportunities and support existing programs for citizens, students, leaders, professionals, and elected officials.
- **Advocacy and Policy:** make preservation a key public policy objective supported by well organized and informed advocacy.
- **Leadership and Capacity:** increase the capacity of preservation organizations and the private sector to engage in preservation by fostering strong leadership and management.

- **Identification and Evaluation:** continue to develop comprehensive survey data for historic resources throughout the state and to evaluate the resources that are known.

Overview

Statewide historic preservation planning is a responsibility of each State Historic Preservation Office under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Federal funding, a key part of the state office's budget, is contingent on regular preparation of a plan. North Carolina's plan is generated by state office staff and produced and distributed with their budget. Thus the "State Plan" is often thought of as the State Historic Preservation Office's official work plan. It is not. Rather, it is largely a product of public input and is intended to express the vision and goals for preservation for all of North Carolina--not only for the state office, but also for nonprofit organizations, elected officials, local preservation commissions, museums, professionals, and citizens. We invite you to be a part of this plan and to find your role as an individual or as part of an organization in realizing these goals and advancing the preservation movement in North Carolina.

North Carolina is blessed with a rich history and wonderful array of architecture, sites, and landscapes which tell our story and reflect our culture. It is a privilege as well as a responsibility to be good stewards of these resources so that they will endure to convey the history of our diverse heritage to the next generation.

The plan set forth in this document and the goals outlined provide a strong framework for all North Carolinians to participate actively in historic preservation. There is a role for everyone, and everyone is needed. We hope that you will become part of a vision for the future of North Carolina that honors its history as we move forward.

North Carolina's Historic Resources

From coastal barrier islands to mountain peaks, North Carolina is rich with historic places and archaeological sites that chart centuries of human experience across a diverse natural and cultural landscape. Most of the major themes of the state's history and prehistory have received at least some recognition over the years through field studies, nominations to the National Register of Historic Places, and designation by local governing boards, though treatment has been admittedly uneven. New themes are developed and familiar themes are expanded with the identification of significant buildings, sites and patterns in the course of the state's continuing archaeological and historic property surveys. Many themes are closely intertwined. The following brief summary addresses major themes and current developments within them, but is by no means comprehensive.

Prehistoric and Historic Archaeological Sites: Archaeological sites reveal more than 12,000 years of human habitation before European contact in what was to become North Carolina. The basic chronology and principal themes of American Indian habitation were developed by archaeologists through decades of field work in the twentieth century, and additional sites continue to be identified through the work of university research laboratories and in archaeological surveys made in advance of environmental impacts. Archaeology is also the principal avenue to our understanding of the early historic period

of European and African contact and settlement. The discovery in Beaufort Inlet of the remains of the vessel believed to have been the *Queen Anne's Revenge*, flagship of the pirate Blackbeard, and excavations at the Berry Site in Morganton, a sixteenth century Spanish contact site, have generated a great deal of public interest and support.

Agriculture: Until the mid-twentieth century, North Carolina was predominantly agricultural and plantations and farms from every generation are central to the state's history and character. Early National Register nominations often focused on the architectural qualities of the largest plantation houses, though in recent years more attention has been given to the associated landscapes and social history. The state's survey program has always identified the simpler farmhouses, tenant houses, barns, and outbuildings of many eras that convey the modest living of the majority of rural families. Unfortunately, relatively few such places have been nominated to the National Register, and the pace of development in rural areas, particularly adjacent to larger cities, has threatened much of North Carolina's traditional rural architecture and landscape. Several rural historic districts have been identified, and a few registered and locally designated, but the absence of zoning or local preservation programs has left them vulnerable. Reductions in grant funding for traditional countywide rural surveys have exacerbated the problem.

Urbanization: This broad theme includes elements of transportation, commerce, industry, community planning, politics and government, social history, ethnic heritage, engineering and public works, education, public health, architecture, and others. Until the late twentieth century, North Carolina had a dispersed pattern of urbanization, with numerous small towns arising along the railroads as trade and social centers for their surrounding areas. Most retain at least remnants of their historic commercial centers encircled by early residential neighborhoods and suburbs. These places have received the lion's share of attention in recent years, primarily because of the active participation of municipalities in preparing National Register historic district nominations to assist redevelopment efforts in historic downtowns and neighborhoods. Special studies of African American neighborhoods have been conducted in Raleigh, Winston-Salem, Wilson, New Bern, Gaston County, and Mecklenburg County, though much work remains to be done in this area.

Transportation: Overcoming natural barriers to transportation on the path to becoming "the good roads state" is a key theme in North Carolina history. Many places associated with the state's transportation history, including its lighthouses, a number of lifesaving stations and railroad stations, and portions of two major canals, have been identified and listed in the National Register. Early service stations, motor courts, and other sites associated with the first decades of the automobile era are also routinely surveyed, though few are registered. The Department of Transportation recently conducted a survey of historic concrete bridges, though as shown by a survey and evaluation of metal truss bridges undertaken in the late 1970s, bridge preservation remains problematic. Public interest has emerged in the identification of early road traces, fords, river navigation improvements, and early railroad and highway corridors. Beyond the First Flight site at Kitty Hawk, little has been identified or evaluated in the area of air transportation.

Religion: Early settlement groups planted their faith as well as their crops in their new land. Generations of church buildings -- grand and modest, rural and urban -- of Episcopal, Quaker, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Reformed, Moravian, and a few Catholic and Jewish congregations have been surveyed, and many are registered. Churches built for African American congregations established after emancipation are also routinely identified in surveys, and a few have been registered. Relatively little is known of places associated with evangelical denominations that have emerged in the more recent past or of places of worship of ethnic and national groups immigrating to the state in the second half of the twentieth century. The preservation of cemeteries, whether affiliated with religious congregations or in public or private hands, is of great public concern. The State Archives sponsors a statewide cemetery survey, though it is not funded and relies entirely on local volunteer groups.

Industrialization: The survey program has always given attention to the state's traditional industries -- textiles, tobacco, and furniture -- and a number of factories and associated mill villages have been registered and locally designated, often prompted by the potential for rehabilitation tax credits and property tax deferral. The mass exodus of traditional industry from the state in recent years has led to special state legislation to encourage the adaptive use of old industrial buildings, but loss of jobs has placed the future of many residential mill villages in jeopardy. Demolition through salvaging materials is an increasing issue that needs to be recognized and addressed.

Education: A number of nineteenth century academy buildings, early one- and two-room public schools, and the historic cores of several campuses received attention in the early years of the state's survey and registration program. The late twentieth century consolidation of public schools has led to the abandonment of many of the two-story brick schools of the 1920s and 1930s, and local preservation groups -- at times working in opposition to unsympathetic school boards -- have led efforts to preserve a number of these buildings. In recent years the State Historic Preservation Office has assisted a grassroots effort to locate and record all that remain of more than 800 Rosenwald schools erected for rural African American students between the 1910s and early 1930s, and a few have been registered or identified as eligible for the National Register.

Military: The state's major battlefields and forts associated with the War of the Regulation, the Revolutionary War, and the Civil War have long been recognized, though some are threatened by encroaching development. Stimulated in part by the work of the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program, public interest has grown in sites of smaller battles, skirmishes, and encampments, with several recent National Register nominations generated. The state's large permanent military installations such as Fort Bragg, Polk Air Force Base, and Camp Lejeune retain buildings and features from the first half of the twentieth century that are now subject to removal or alteration as military needs and programs change.

Recreation and Tourism: The state's beaches, mountains, and mineral spring spas have drawn tourists since the nineteenth century, and a number of early resort hotels, summer

houses, and summer communities like Roaring Gap, Linville, Little Switzerland, Nags Head, Montreat, Flat Rock, and Highlands predate the era of mass automobile tourism. Development, especially in parts of the coast and mountains, threatens older resort fabric.

The Recent Past: North Carolina has a distinguished collection of early modernist architecture from the late 1940s into the 1960s that reflects the influence of the School of the Design at N.C. State College (now University) and forward-thinking architects such as A.G. Odell in Charlotte. Built as harbingers of what was to have been the bright new age of modernism, today many of these buildings are subject to the same public indifference that the architecture of previous generations endured in the mid-twentieth century. Charlotte and Raleigh have undertaken surveys of post-World War II buildings. A number of Raleigh's early modernist works designed by School of Design faculty and a few landmarks of the International Style elsewhere have been registered and locally designated.

Creating the Plan

In August of 2000, the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office produced *Legacy 2000*, the state's second comprehensive preservation plan that was a revision of the initial *Legacy* prepared in the mid-1990s. These documents set forth a mission statement for the State Historic Preservation Office (HPO), summarized what was known about historic resources in the state and programs to protect them, outlined challenges and opportunities for preservation, and developed an action agenda to guide the HPO and larger preservation community for the upcoming years. They also provided background material about the planning effort as a whole. These documents served North Carolina well. In 2005 and 2006 we took the opportunity to reflect on *Legacy 2000* and to chart a new course for the future.

The North Carolina Historic Preservation Plan for 2006-2012 has been developed on the basis of research and review in a number of contexts. First, HPO staff reviewed *Legacy 2000* and HPO workplans for the past five years. This review provided a good understanding of the direction of the HPO five years ago and the progress made in that direction up to the present.

Public participation was the key part of the planning process and provided staff with the challenge of organizing, coordinating, and consolidating that input, without losing its intent, into a document that addressed current conditions, values, needs, issues, opportunities, goals, and objectives.

The staff also shaped objectives for the format and publication of the plan itself. It was to be concise, user-friendly, and available both in print and on the web for wide distribution.

Public Participation

The HPO solicited input from the public in three ways—a citizen questionnaire, a survey of community leaders, and a series of regional one-day planning retreats with a Public Advisory Committee.

In the winter of 2005 a questionnaire was distributed via news releases, public libraries and an email distribution list to North Carolina citizens. Three hundred and nine respondents, self identified as interested citizens, educators, consultants, developers, government officials, heritage tourism professionals, property owners, local preservation commission members, and others, answered a broad range of questions. They provided general demographic information and insight into a number of issues including what historic resources are important, preservation's values to society, factors affecting the quality of life in their community, preservation needs, effective tools for preservation, and the best role for the HPO.

The HPO also wanted to involve community leaders--elected officials, business and civic leaders, and those who make things happen behind the scenes. Using a survey developed by the HPO, local historic preservation commissions spearheaded this effort and received responses from 98 people who offered their perceptions about preservation and the work of the HPO.

To deepen the discussion and examine the issues more thoroughly, the HPO created a Public Advisory Committee (PAC) composed of citizens from across the state representing various constituencies with a specific interest in preservation. The fields represented were academia, African American historic preservation, archaeology, architecture and engineering, community development, conservation, preservation consulting, building contractors, building trades, economic development, elected officials, federal agencies, heritage tourism, historic sites, local preservation commissions, and nonprofits, including Preservation North Carolina.

The HPO held three regional meetings (in Greenville, Raleigh, and Asheville) for the PAC in March and April of 2005. Staff briefed committee members on the purpose of the plan and reviewed the results of the citizen questionnaire and the survey for community leaders. PAC members discussed their vision for preservation in the state as a whole and examined the needs and issues that had been presented in the surveys and questionnaires. They also shared their priorities for the work of the HPO to shape its direction for the coming years.

Vision

Public participation is most evident in the development of a preservation vision for North Carolina. More abstract than a mission statement and less specific than goals or objectives—a vision for preservation in North Carolina is a description of where preservation will be in the future and what it will look like. Citizens spoke eloquently about preservation values and hopes for the future and produced a vision for preservation in North Carolina.

Our collective vision is that preservation and the preservation community will

- reflect the full, rich, and diverse history of North Carolina
- build communities and social relationships
- tell our stories in a connective context increasing knowledge and respect for our diverse heritage
- educate and empower citizens to shape the future of their communities
- create strong networks for communication and action
- be integrated into all facets of planning and decision making
- be a strong presence in shaping policies and legislation
- evolve through self examination and adoption of new technologies and techniques
- inspire the next generation to understand its history and to be good stewards of it

Issues and Needs

There are many issues facing preservation in North Carolina. Some are threats, some are needs, and all are, in some way, opportunities. While this portion of the plan outlines some specific issues, other issues are implied and reflected in the goals and objectives. As with the entire plan, input from public participation was the primary source for information about issues facing preservation.

Land use issues represent perhaps the greatest threat to historic preservation in North Carolina. These include sprawl, growth and development pressures in some areas while other communities suffer dis-investment and loss of population, zoning (or lack thereof), and poor urban design.

Training and education are perceived as important needs--education for the public at large, school students, elected officials; training for government staff and preservation commissions. Lack of public information and awareness of historic resources is also a key issue. Lack of awareness leads to a lack of appreciation of and concern for historic resources. Lack of appreciation not only affects the public at large, but also those in decision making capacities.

Local preservation planning is an issue. There is a need and an opportunity for more local resource surveys and preservation plans. Heritage tourism, which springs from good resource data, also represents an opportunity. As a major source of revenue in many communities it offers an opportunity to communicate historic preservation's economic impact on local communities. An understanding of how craft and folkways intersect with preservation issues, particularly in the western part of the state, is important.

Economic issues have a large impact on preservation, whether it is the performance of the general economy or the availability of economic incentives, grants, and adequate public and private funding for preservation activity. There is also an opportunity to document preservation's role in economic development by turning vacant and underutilized properties into revenue generators.

There is a great need for preservation legislation. Stronger laws at the state and local level were cited as well as enforcement of existing laws. Enforcement depends, of course, on political will. That sort of support and cooperation can also be considered part of a more abstract quality of leadership, which is sorely needed throughout the preservation community in North Carolina.

Goals and Objectives

Based on the issues and opportunities identified above and additional dialogue with the planning participants, five major goals for the upcoming planning cycle emerged: outreach and communication, education, advocacy and policy, identification and evaluation, and leadership and capacity. These goals and objectives are broad in scope and may not directly capture all the concerns expressed by participants but do reflect those that participants indicated were priorities.

I. Outreach and Communication: Create a strong preservation network that shares successes and information with a variety of audiences through technology and targeted public relations.

- A. Establish a strong preservation network supported by technology, to include a wide spectrum of parties, for the purpose of improved, proactive and efficient communication.

- B. Continue to make preservation data available online (programmatic data, survey data, funding information, basic preservation information), create links to other relevant preservation resources and continue to review and revise online presence.
- C. Reach out and communicate preservation information and success stories to a wide population including non-traditional partners and audiences.
- D. Launch a public education/awareness campaign to establish the image of preservation in North Carolina. Give the movement relevance by publishing among other things the economic benefits of preservation. Launch a public relations and “branding” campaign for preservation.
- E. Institute a standing statewide Preservation Advisory Committee.

II. Education: Create new educational opportunities and support existing programs for citizens, students, leaders, professionals and elected officials.

- A. Provide training on a variety of topics specifically for decision makers at the state and local levels including elected officials and preservation and planning commission members and staff.
- B. Work with established educational institutions and preservation partners to develop formal programs in preservation (as it relates to architecture, planning and public administration), cultural resource management and the preservation-related building trades.
- C. Create a task force to examine technical issues and develop curriculum/training and technical briefings.
- D. Make educational opportunities available to citizens in their own communities through partnership and technology.
- E. Explore heritage education at the secondary level.
- F. Develop and implement a mentoring program for preservation commissions and nonprofits.

III. Advocacy and Policy: Make preservation a key public policy objective supported by well organized and informed advocacy.

- A. Create a grassroots advocacy network to coordinate legislative updates, briefing materials, and events.
- B. Examine specific public policy issues such as a rehabilitation building code, governmental office and school locations, archaeological protection policies, stewardship of publicly owned buildings, enforcement of existing laws and policies, and tax credits and incentives for small projects.
- C. Revise and widely distribute existing state preservation economic impact study and encourage creation of local preservation economic impact studies.

IV. Leadership and Capacity: Increase the capacity of preservation organizations and the private sector to engage in preservation by fostering strong leadership and management.

- A. Use appropriate technology for mapping, record keeping and communication, and seek out resources to maintain technology.
- B. Seek out new, inventive and dependable sources of funding for preservation projects and programs.
- C. Improve visibility of preservation programs and increase accessibility to programs and people.
- D. Examine and assess preservation programs, processes, and services to ensure they are operating efficiently and effectively and, if not, seek ways to improve them.
- E. Develop a strategic plan to increase preservation leadership and capacity statewide.

V. Identification and Evaluation: Continue to develop comprehensive survey data for historic resources throughout the state and evaluate the resources that are known.

- A. Explore initiatives especially among state agencies and non-traditional partnerships to secure resources to increase survey and National Register data and make it available, particularly via digital means.
- B. Identify thematic and geographic survey and nomination needs in under-surveyed localities and those with older surveys and work strategically to secure resources to address them.
- C. Work to integrate historic resource data within state and local governments' GIS systems.

Planning Cycle

The North Carolina Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan 2006-2012 began October 1, 2006 and runs through September 30, 2012. There will be special emphasis on distribution and promotion of the plan. We will periodically evaluate progress, and toward the end of the planning period we will begin the process for developing the next plan.

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